

**Transportation Coordinating Committee**  
**9:30 a.m., Friday, March 3, 2023**  
**Meeting Summary**

**John Orr, Chair**

**1. Welcome, Public Comment**

John Orr, ARC, established that David Haynes, Arc, would be acting as Chair for this meeting. Mr. Haynes, welcomed everyone to the meeting and summarized the agenda for the morning

Mr. Haynes opened the floor for public comment. No public comment was received at this meeting.

**2. TIP/MTP Amendment #7 (First Read)**

Patrick Bradshaw presented on the details of TIP/MTP Amendment #7.

11 projects will be affected by this TIP update including 5 GDOT-sponsored projects and 6 locally-sponsored projects. Mr. Bradshaw discussed the fund balances over the next several fiscal years out to FY 2028 for different funding buckets.

Two locally sponsored projects have seen bids that are much higher than allocated money, so they are receiving additional federal funding to compensate for those expected cost increases and maintain an 80% federal share of those projects.

Mr. Bradshaw described how ARC's federal dollars have effected many local projects around the region. They are being accelerated through local SPLOST dollars now that those local governments can offset other projects with federal dollars.

GDOT's I-285 TOP End Express Lanes project is experiencing cost increases through this Amendment, and several other roadway projects are seeing cost shifts as well.

Mr. Bradshaw described the schedule for this Amendment to be approved by TCC, TAQC, the ARC Board, and the GRTA Board before submission to the FHWA.

**3. Federal Performance Targets (First Read)**

Tejas Kotak, ARC, presented on federal performance measures. Three main performance measures: PM 1 (safety); PM2 (asset management); PM 3 (system performance / CMAQ). PM 1 measures are reported annually, and PM 2 and 3 are reported bi-annually. Data are still collected annually for each measure on how the state and region are performing.

PM 1, safety targets, are initially set by GDOT through the state's HSIP but ARC adopts more aggressive and aspirational 5% reduction targets

PM 2, asset management, track condition of roadway and bridges on the NHS network. ARC typically concurs with GDOT targets since almost all roadways are state owned and maintained.

PM 3, system performance and CMAQ, tracks a range of person-miles traveled, travel time reliability, and automobile emissions. ARC typically concurs with GDOT targets and sets MPO-specific targets where required.

Jared Lombard, FHWA, asked whether ARC is prepared to accept additional reporting requirements if we set independent safety targets or if ARC is setting “aspirational targets.” John Orr, ARC, clarified that ARC technically concurs with GDOT’s targets and has internal targets. Mr. Lombard asked that ARC clarify the language in reporting documents.

Gil Grodzinsky, EPD, asked whether Serious Injury targets should match in units. Tejas Kotak, ARC, clarified that ARC’s target was mis-typed and corrected the mistake.

Phil Mallon, Fayette County, asked whether safety targets would be applied to local roadways. David Haynes, ARC, clarified that the targets would not be mandated upon local governments but would help inform regional and local plans (i.e. CTPs or corridor studies). John Orr stated that the TIP has to support safety targets, and Mr. Haynes agreed that the cumulative effect of regional funding should help steer the region towards reporting on performance measures.

Jamie Fischer, GRTA, asked for clarification on the units for Serious Injury Rates. Tejas Kotak confirmed that the rate is per 100 million vehicle-miles traveled and clarified that the slide has a typo which he will correct.

#### **4. MTP Update Fiscal Constraint Assumptions**

David Haynes, ARC, presented on the needs and process for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Needs for the MTP include ensuring constrained project costs are funded through all phases of implementation, that revenues are “reasonably available” by expectations like projected gas tax revenue and federal funds, and expectation for federal, state, or local dollars.

Mr. Haynes described the Key Financial Assumptions for building the MTP project list and financials. There is consideration for inflation rates, baseline federal formula funding, expectations of how much federal money will be apportioned for projects in the Atlanta region, and the discretionary funding programs offered by the federal government. Mr. Haynes commented that these cost expectations are continually discussed through the Interagency Consultation Group with ARC, GDOT, SRTA, GRTA, ATL, and federal partners.

Mr. Haynes described how inflation rates are used to project financial needs. He described how inflation rates spiked to 9.6% in the first half of 2022 due to the war in Ukraine and supply chain disruptions among other factors, but that it leveled out to 3.3% for the latter half of the year. Mr. Haynes also showed inflation rates over 30 years showing how inflation has been 2.25% over the past 10 years, but it is worth watching if recent spikes are part of a new trend. These longer-term trends should be considered as ARC projects out a constrained financial model for the MTP. ARC will use a rate between 2.5-3.0% based on conversations with the Interagency Consultation Group. Baseline federal funding is a consideration for financial assumptions. We saw a 21% increase in annual funding from IJA 2021-2022, 2% from 2022-2023, and federal guidance suggests we can expect a 1% increase beyond 2026. Statewide apportionment of federal funding has been apportioned by the MPO’s share of state employment in recent years, and there is need to reconsider whether employment or population share is a better metric for the apportionment.

Phill Mallon, Fayette County, asked which counties are included in these calculations. My Haynes clarified that it’s the 20-county region, but that the changes in the Urbanized Area Boundaries will change this.

Mr. Haynes described how federal discretionary funding offers a large opportunity to add money to the MTP/TIP, but that the Atlanta region has not had a good overall track record of winning federal grants. Reasonable inclusions of discretionary funding will be included in the MTP, such as our better track record of pulling down transit grants for buses and bus facilities.

Sam Baker, Henry County, asked if ARC looked at year over year results for how accurate assumptions on inflation rates has been. Mr. Haynes responded that using the CPI measure has been a traditional and accurate enough measure that. Patrick Bradshaw, ARC, commented that short-term results have been largely inaccurate, and it's worth studying how accurate longer-term trends have been. Mr. Bradshaw also suggested that a bill in the state legislature on a kilowatt-hour tax on electric charging could affect future revenue expectations.

Brian Kelly, Rockdale County, asked how local governments in ARC can be more competitive to draw down federal discretionary dollars. Mr. Haynes responded that more should be done to coordinate efforts and guide local governments.

Jamie Fischer, SRTA/GRTA, commented that the public-facing nature of the MTP/TIP is a reason to be cautious on inflation so that we do not over-promise funding expectations to our local partners. Mr. Haynes thanked Ms. Fischer for her comments.

Laura Beall, Cobb County, commented that she could share the inflation rates Cobb County has used over the past 30 years.

A member of the public asked how General Funding expectations are factored into fiscal assumptions. Mr. Haynes responded that transportation dollars are largely from local SPLOST/TSPLOST, and it is difficult to track how much is allocated from local general funds on an annual basis.

Gil Grodzinsky, EPD, commented that inflation has been fairly stable across all sectors, but wondered if transportation-related sectors, like concrete prices, could be a more robust measure. Mr. Haynes responded that we typically use the CPI measure as a safe metric that is reliable and based on our understanding of federal guidance. If future federal guidelines on different metrics emerge, then ARC will update our methods.

## **5. Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) – Part I**

David Haynes, ARC, continued to present on the Reconnecting Communities discretionary program, which USDOT recently announced its first awards for. The Atlanta region received two awards in this round of funding. \$1.1 million for the Stitch project in the City of Atlanta, and \$2 million for the City of Roswell's Big Creek Greenway project.

Mr. Haynes suggested that looking at the six projects which received capital projects could help us with expectations for this program:

- These projects received about 50% funding from the federal government, which is what we can reasonably assume for projects in this program.
- The types of projects that won capital awards are reconnecting communities, especially disadvantaged, that were separated by projects that were planned and built before the NEPA process. Projects seeking funding should aim to redress those wrongs from a previous era.

Mr. Haynes described the Reconnecting Communities Institute, and opportunity to better understand how to apply for these grants.

Mr. Haynes previewed the map USDOT uses for Historically Disadvantaged Census Tracts and encouraged sponsors to look at it when considering applications.

Phil Mallon, Fayette County, thanked ARC for the analysis of what kinds of projects are best suited for these grants.

Laura Beall, Cobb County, asked if this would be shared with the Board. John Orr commented that a shorter version of this presentation be shared with them.

## **6. Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) – Part II**

Kofi Wakhisi, ARC, presented on

Mr. Wakhisi described how IIJA created the Joint Office of Energy and Transportation between USDOT and US DOE to advanced vehicle electrification grants. The recent NOI has three areas of interest:

1. Enhancing EV Charging Resiliency
2. Equitable Access and Opportunity (Community Driven Models of EV Deployment & Workforce Development)
3. Improving Performance & Reliability

The Joint Office has established minimum standards on a variety of issues related to workforce, data sharing, signage, interoperability, and other EV-charging related issues. Mr. Wakhisi encouraged interested sponsors to take a look at federal guidance and offered his expertise to anyone interested in a conversation.

Mr. Haynes commented that maintenance will be core concern moving forward. He contrasted the high use and observation of gas pumps compared to how few EC chargers there are now, and how there are risks to chargers that are in far corners of parking lots of being unmaintained or vandalized.

Jared Lombard, FHWA, commented that this NOFO will offer \$700 million, and that ADA standards will be required for charging stations as well.

Mr. Wakhisi commented that good planning to meet these federal standards for charging infrastructure is necessary, and that all agencies in the region will be figuring this out together.

Phil Mallon, Fayette County, asked if a regional application would be considered for this. Mr. Haynes responded that it is being considered by ARC.

## **7. Quadrennial Certification of the MPO Process**

David Haynes, ARC, presented on the Quadrennial Certification process by which the federal government reviews our processes, financials, conducts a site visit, and certifies our existence as an MPO.

The 2019 review resulted in five commendations, seven recommendations on national best practices ARC could adopts, and no corrective actions.

Mr. Haynes described the schedule for the certification process from December 2022 – September 2023. The site visit by USDOT will be May 23-25, and be an opportunity for local partners to speak with USDOT on ARC processes, procedures, and make them aware of any comments or concerns on how ARC conducts its work.

## **8. Other Items and Announcements**

Mr. Haynes commented the IJJA Coordinator position is still open at ARC.

Jean Hee Barrett, ARC, announced that there will not be a TIP Solicitation this year due to enough funds being drawn down already, a need to balance staff work this year, and that another TIP Solicitation is planned for early 2024.

Gil Grodzinsky, EPD, announced that EPD is planning on reducing the requirements for vehicle emissions testing as part of an update to the modelling methods for the State Implementation Plan.

Laura, Cobb County, introduced a new Cobb County DOT member.

## **9. Adjourn**

David Haynes adjourned the meeting.